



KEYS TO EFFECTIVE HEALTH PROMOTION



Key #4: Follow Up

Why follow up?

Getting feedback from program participants serves two purposes: to obtain data that quantifies a program's impact, and to find ways to improve a program.

Building follow up into health promotion

Keep it simple

- Keep follow up to information you absolutely require. A three-question survey is more likely to get a response than one with 20 questions.
- Use email or phone for follow-up. Use personal, AKO, and installation email addresses; use cell phone and unit phone numbers.
- Go to the Soldiers: go to the unit or somewhere else they will all be gathered (like the APFT test location), and get follow up information there.
- Give participants a stamped envelope addressed to you, with a printed form listing the information you will need.

Keep it structured

- Tell participants right from the beginning that you will be doing follow up after the program is finished. Be specific about the information you will collect.
- If you need to do hands-on measurements, find out if participants will be coming back to your location for another reason (like another clinic appointment). Ask them to stop by while they are in the building – or, better yet, go to where they will be.
- Ask participants where they will be the next time you will be collecting data. They may already know their next duty station if they will be PCSing soon.
- Develop a relationship with the 1SGT or other leader in a unit – ask them to help you get the information you need.
- Plan ahead for follow up and put it on the schedule. Planning to do follow up “when you have time” usually means follow up will never get done.

Keep it catchy

- Give participants something to go along with the request for information. For example, if you send an email to ask for information, send along a yummy recipe or a timely fitness tip.
- Schedule a ‘reunion’ day to collect follow up information. Invite participants to come back and share successes and challenges. Have some (healthy) munchies available.
- Have a silly contest – the team with the most follow up data wins something, like having their photos posted on a prominently-placed bulletin board or an eggplant trophy, or some other fun thing.